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No. 10

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 21, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM MCCLINTOCK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

PRISONERS ARE BEING RELEASED FROM GUANTANAMO AT AN ALARMING RATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation I introduced last week as a companion piece to a bill offered by Senator KELLY AYOTTE to protect the safety of the United States and its allies and restrict the transfers of detainees from Guantanamo Bay.

Since mid-November, the President and his administration have ramped up

an effort to make good on a campaign promise to increase the number of Guantanamo detainee transfers. Last night during his State of the Union Address, the President reaffirmed his commitment to close this facility once and for all, and he is releasing prisoners at an alarming rate. Twenty-one terrorists have been released just in November alone to foreign countries. This comes at the expense of our own national security.

H.R. 401, the Detaining Terrorists to Protect America Act of 2015, would suspend the transfer of high- and medium-risk detainees and prohibit any detainee transfers to Yemen as well as increase transparency regarding the remaining Guantanamo detainees.

Detainees at GTMO pose a real threat to our national security. When I speak with folks at home, my constituents, moms and dads, and they ask me how safe we really are, this rate of reengagement comes to mind. The U.S. intelligence community reports that the number of former GTMO detainees who reengage in terrorism has steadily increased since 2002.

According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, they reported the combined and suspected confirmed reengagement rate of former GTMO detainees has risen to more than an alarming 30 percent. Before we proceed with any more additional transfers, we must ensure the transfer process is further examined and improved.

In order to protect our fellow Americans, we must stop releasing some of the world's most dangerous terrorists, especially given the fact that they are already reengaging in hostilities against the United States and our allies.

This measure would repeal current law that has allowed the administration to transfer prisoners to foreign countries and reduce the population at GTMO down to 127. The bill also would

prohibit transfers of terror suspects to a foreign country if there has been a confirmed case where an individual was transferred from GTMO and engaged in any other terrorist activity.

The bill would also prohibit the transfer of terror suspects considered to be high or medium risk. Some of the most recent transfer detainees fell into those categories.

In addition, this bill would stop the transfer of detainees to Yemen because the country has become a hotbed for terrorist activities. It makes no sense to send terrorists to a country where there is an active al Qaeda network that we know has been engaged in targeting the U.S.

Most importantly, Yemen's branch of al Qaeda, commonly known as AQAP, was founded by former GTMO detainees. Counterterrorism experts have declared AQAP to be al Qaeda's most effective affiliate, posing the greatest danger to the American homeland.

We cannot risk trusting the world's most dangerous terrorists to its most dangerous places, nor should we simply cut them loose in rich, stable countries with no security safeguards in place. We have to ask ourselves today: How much are we really willing to risk with our own national security in our American homeland?

I want to thank Senator AYOTTE for working with me, and I look forward to working with her to advance this legislation. I look forward to continuing our partnership to prevent the release of dangerous terrorists who seek to reengage in terrorism against the U.S. and our allies. This bill ensures our homeland remains safe from those terrorist attacks.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CONGRESS CAN LEARN FROM CHERYL STRAYED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The Chair recognizes

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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